

THE EDITOR

Dear readers of *Communication Directory*,

With the latest issue of *Communication Director* magazine hot off the press, this month's newsletter features an article by Ryszard Ławniczak on how political journalism and public relations worked together in Poland to help forge a new social and economic identity. Without giving too much away, the interplay between political and corporate communications is a theme we'll explore in the next issue of the magazine; in the meantime, below you can read our comment on the failure of the EU to 'sell' the Lisbon Treaty to voters in Ireland.

Until next month,



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COMMENTARY

The Emerald Isle says 'No'

Like a dismissive restaurateur returning a carefully-prepared meal to the kitchen, Ireland has refused the Lisbon Treaty put before them last week. It's a result that ticks all possible boxes in the nay-saying opinion polls: the treaty was unworkable; the EU is unworkable; representative democracy is unworkable. The prospect of such a small country tripping up the juggernaut progress of the EU has triggered fears that the result will lead to a re-nationalisation of European politics, and that the best option for the EU is to do away with the rule of uniformity and turn to an elite group of advanced members to lead the movement for integration. But from a communications perspective, the key issue must be how to get people to have an informed opinion on a complex 450-page legal text in the first place. That is the challenge facing those charged with communicating the EU's message and with promoting a vision of Europe that overcomes



the (arguably) largely unfounded fears of the sceptics. In some corners of Europe, the EU will always have a problem selling itself as anything other than a mass of bureaucracy, and this latest twist could be seen to be yet another failure of communication on the part of the EU.

By Dafydd Phillips

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

How economic journalism and transitional Public Relations worked together to help smooth social and economic transitions and contribute to Poland's EU membership.

by Ryszard Ławniczak

A great deal has been written on the relationship between journalism and public relations in recent years, but relatively little has been published on the rather specific nature of this relationship in the Central and East European (C&EE) 'countries of transition', and, in particular, the situation in Poland.

TRANSITION CHALLENGES FOR MEDIA AND PR Since the fall of the Berlin Wall on Nov 9th 1989, the countries of C&EE and the former Soviet Union have had to engage in a unique process of converting from centrally-planned economies to market economies, from party dictatorship to democracy, and from socialism to capitalism. This process has been difficult for most but particularly painful for selected social groups in each country, leading to resentment and even unrest. However, ten C&EE and former Soviet Union countries joined the European Union (EU) in May 2005 after meeting all or most of certain benchmarks. A key factor in the transition of these countries has been the degree to which social attitudes can be changed, for example the elimination of 'socialist' thinking and the over-reliance on government subsidies; a change in people's attitude toward work; and the removal of residual fears and prejudices against capitalism.

NEW COMMUNICATION APPROACH Besides the necessary changes in thoughts and attitudes, an economic education of the

transition societies was also a precondition for future EU membership. At the beginning of the 90s, such market economy institutions and tools as stock exchange, shares, bonds, VAT, mortgage banks and loans were unknown to these future members of the EU. It was absolutely necessary to prepare a nationwide economic educational campaign to present the advantages, institutions and tools of market economy. Government and entrepreneurs needed the support of both PR and media in that respect. The 'transition challenges' for media and the PR industry created a demand for a specific type of economic journalist, possessing an excellent knowledge of market economics and the ability to communicate this knowledge in an easily understood way to societies educated in socialist values. There was also a need for a new communication approach, the so-called 'transitional public relations', useful for reversing or at least mitigating the fears and prejudices towards 'ruthless capitalism', but also for adopting the mechanisms of market economy and democracy, and thus facilitating an effectively functioning market economy.

THE MEDIA AND PR INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE Poland experienced sweeping changes that affected both the structures of media and the rules that governed their operations. The state was deprived of its exclusive control of the press, and a number of new private broadcasting companies emerged to compete with public radio and television. The media market has been shaped by a spontaneous and largely unsupervised transition process. Most Polish media have fallen into the hands of foreign capital. Although

Western investors have denied representing the interests of their home countries, their parent companies or other political groups, a strong case can be made to prove that is exactly what they do. With little more than a decade behind it, Poland's PR sector is relatively young. Its emergence and evolution were a response to transformations occurring in the transitional economy. By 2006 the approximate annual value of the public relations sector in Poland had grown from about 80 to 120-130 million zloty (about 35 million Euros), and reached the value of 200 million zloty (about 60 million Euros) by 2007.

NON-EXISTENT PR The evolution of PR in Poland has followed two tracks. On the one hand, many Western corporations that entered Poland also brought with them the need for PR services. On the other hand, before establishing market tools, mechanisms, and institutions, the C&EE governments engaged public relations agencies to carry out public information campaigns. Since the PR market was virtually non-existent in these countries, their governments hired Western companies, which in turn relied on the help of local consultants. In this way, although external funds went to external contractors, the transformation created an impetus for the emergence of a Western-style public relations industry in transition economies.

LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP Even today, media relations appear to be the most popular activity among Polish PR practitioners. The other characteristic feature is that most Polish PR practitioners are former journalists, so no wonder they officially declare a good relationship with the media. However, the really serious problem—which illustrates the present relationship between journalists and PR specialists—is the problem of ethics. It has been debated quite heatedly since the establishment of the Polish Public Relations Association and the Association of Public Relations Firms. Both organisations set out detailed ethical guidelines for its members. However, ethical principles are frequently violated, and both sides accuse each other of those violations. The

two most common violations are worth mentioning in detail. The first is the corruption of journalists (there is a practice of offering material benefits to journalists in order, for example, to persuade them to include desirable messages in their articles, which is referred to as 'non-standard advertising'). The second violation is the unofficial practice by an organisation of furnishing the media with anonymous messages aimed at tarnishing the image of the organisation's competitors. As for today, the mutual relationship between journalists and PR specialists (a type of love/hate relationship) has not changed much, and there remain criticisms on both sides of incompetence, lack of professionalism, greed and so on. The most often-used insults in this context are 'black PR' and 'guided journalism'.

UNITED FRONT—KEY MESSAGES However, from the beginning of the Nineties until today there have been two important issues, in the coverage of which a kind of united front exists between media and economic journalists on one side, and PR specialists on the other. These are (a) the promotion of a neo-liberal 'shock therapy' approach to economic reform, and (b) the support for Poland's membership of the EU.

One of the most difficult tasks faced by Poland and other formerly centrally-planned economies was to select the best model for a market economy. When this issue was debated in the early Nineties, neo-liberal economists noted that a number of elements in Poland's socio-cultural heritage made the Anglo-Saxon model of capitalism the best match for the Polish economic environment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

How Poland was transformed by its media and public relations

- ▶ Transition challenges for both media and PR, including social attitudes and economic education.
- ▶ Domination of foreign ownership of media and specific role of transitional PR.
- ▶ A love-hate relationship between the two professions has meant a transition not without its difficulties.
- ▶ However, both present a 'united front' to convey two key messages: the TINA ideology and promotion of the EU

Alternatives to this brand of capitalism included the more institutionally and socially-oriented models prevalent in Germany and Scandinavia.

Poland's final decision on this debate has been written into Article 20 of the redrafted Constitution of April 2nd 1997 which states that the "social market economy [...] lies at the heart of the economic system of the Republic of Poland." Despite this constitutional provision, the model that actually prevails in Poland bears more resemblance to the Anglo-Saxon variety.

The most striking slogan used in the PR campaign to promote the neo-liberal model was TINA: There Is No Alternative to such a mode of growth, there is no 'third way', and other models such as the Scandinavian one have simply failed. As the prominent Polish journalist Jacek Żakowski noted: "Polish media, just like in several other developed countries, have been monopolised by TINA. It has become so powerful in Polish politics that even basic political questions ('how much private ownership?', 'how big should income discrepancies be?', 'what is the role of the state?', 'how to defend public interest in the economy?') have practically been eradicated from debates. Where there is no alternative, there is nothing left to discuss." (Żakowski, 2005).

THE VICTORY OF THE NEO-LIBERAL CONCEPT Victory for the neo-liberal concept can be attributed to two concepts:

1) *Strong pro-American feelings and "Polish people's readiness to accept liberal economic concepts which is clearly not the case in the other parts of the region"* (Kiss, 1999)

2) *Successful PR activities promoting neo-liberal concepts, with a strong engagement of economic journalists in cooperation with specific intermediaries, the "aid-funded private organizations"* (Wedel, 1998), such as Polish think tanks. *These think tanks organise a series of conferences, the outcomes of which are disseminated to the media via press releases. This way, the campaign-related materials are published later on in the dailies, weeklies, and/or used by television commentators. Employees of these think tanks practically monopolise the media, appearing as 'independent experts' commenting on current economic developments.*

The other result of the abovementioned 'united front' for the promotion of a neo-liberal model of development is the fact that Poland has joined the club of more liberal EU members, in contrast to more social-market-oriented Germany, Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries. A citizen of 'old' Europe visiting Poland will discover the difference easily when, on a Sunday or even on a Catholic holiday, he can experience crowds of Polish consumers packing out the shopping malls, which are open until 9pm.

These two issues, which united the media and particularly the economic commentators and PR specialists, proved crucial to the development of the Polish economy and to the support for EU membership, for adoption of the EU Constitution and the Euro. The role of the think tanks as intermediaries—presenting the background public relations materials, preparing arguments and conferences—should also be underlined.

CONCLUSION In the author's opinion, a specific approach of transitional PR 'with a little help from our friends' (economic journalist and think tanks acting as intermediaries) has contributed to achieving desirable transformations in social consciousness, and re-introduced market economy institutions and tools in a relatively short time. This 'united front' between media and PR specialists has ensured a smooth transition from one socio-political and economic system to another, and, in the final analysis, enabled Poland's EU membership. |

STORYTELLER



This article was published in Communication Director's previous issue "Natural Competitors: The struggle between journalism and PR." Ryszard Ławniczak is the Head of the Department of Economic Journalism and Public Relations at Poznan University of Economics. He coined the term "transitional public relations" and introduced it into PR literature, publishing the first book on Polish Public Relations in English. Ławniczak has also been economic advisor to the President of Poland from 1997 to 2006.

Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / June 2008

DAIMLER



Jörg Howe
(Head of Global Communications)
Institution: Daimler AG
Start: November 1



Germany: Howe takes over Global Communications at Daimler

Effective November 1, JÖRG HOWE will become the new Head of Global Communications at Daimler AG in Stuttgart. He replaces Hartmut Schick, who has occupied the position since January 2002, and who will take over an as-yet unannounced new executive position within the operative business of the group. Howe, currently Director of Corporate Communications at Arcandor AG in Essen, will report to the Chairman, Dr. Dieter Zetsche, and will have global responsibility for the external and internal communications of the company.

LAFARGE



Sara Ravella
(Director of Communications)
Institution: Lafarge Group
Start: June 2008



France: New Director of Communications for Lafarge Group

The Lafarge Group, the French building materials company, has announced the appointment of SARA RAVELLA as Director of Communications and a member of the Executive Committee. Ravella began her career at the United Nations in Geneva and then occupied several international posts, including S.T. Microelectronics and Rhodia. She joined Lafarge in 2003 as Senior Vice-President, Organization, Development and Training, within the Human Resources department. Ravella replaces Philippe Hadouin, who had occupied this position since 2001.

BARCLAYS



Howell James
(Corporate Affairs Director)
Institution: Barclays Bank
Start: September



UK: James makes comms move from public to private sector

Barclays Bank has appointed HOWELL JAMES, previously Permanent Secretary, Government Communications at the Cabinet Office, to the role of Barclays Corporate Affairs Director. James, who will report to Cathy Turner, Group Human Resources Director, will lead all areas of Corporate Affairs working closely with Barclays top management and Board. His portfolio will comprise media relations, public policy, internal communications and corporate social responsibility. He replaces Stephen Whitehead, who joined Prudential at the end of last year.

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Recent Appointments from the World of Communications / June 2008



Anne Le Corre
(Director of Communications)
Institution: Société Générale
Start: May 20

France: New comms promotion for Anne Le Corre

Société Générale, the French financial services provider, has recently appointed ANNE LE CORRE as Director of Communications, effective May 20. A graduate of Co Rouen Sup, Corre began her career in 1985 as the Director of Marketing for Société Générale. In 1988, she became responsible for international publicity and, in 2001 was appointed head of Global Communications in the private management division, her most recent function before her latest promotion.



David Wells
(Head of Marketing and Communications)
Institution: JP Morgan
Start: August 11

UK: Wells makes the move from journalism to corporate comms

DAVID WELLS, currently International Companies News Editor at the Financial Times, will join JPMorgan as Head of Marketing and Communications for EMEA on August 11. Based in London, he will oversee corporate media relations across the region. He has been with the Financial Times for five years and was previously Deputy World News Editor. Prior to that, he was the senior Wall Street correspondent based in New York.



Vegar Stokset
(Senior Vice President Communications)
Institution: Grenland Group
Start: June 2

Norway: New communications role for Vegar Stokset

VEGAR STOKSET assumed the position as Senior Vice President of Communications of Norwegian engineering and construction company Grenland Group on June 2. Previously, Stokset was a Communications Manager of StatoilHydro, a Fortune 50 integrated oil and gas company based in Norway. With a degree in Journalism, Stokset worked for several newspapers, before entering the Energy industry ten years ago.



Jonas Montani
(Head of Information and Communication)
Institution: FOM
Start: May 25

Switzerland: New Head of Communication at the FOM

JONAS MONTANI was appointed Head of Information and Communication of the Federal Office for Migration (FOM) and began on the 25th of May. He replaces Brigitte Hauser-Süess, who now heads the Information Service within the General Secretariat of the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FOJ). Previously, Montani worked as editor at the Walliser Bote and as a freelancer for the newspaper Der Bund.



Peter Jenkins
(Head of Communications and Media Relations)
Institution: ERA
Start: May 20

UK: New Communications role for Peter Jenkins

The Energy Retail Association (ERA), who represent the major electricity and gas suppliers in the domestic market in the UK, has appointed PETER JENKINS as its new Head of Communications and Media Relations. Jenkins, who began his new role on the 20th of May, joined the ERA from consultancy Caro Communications, having previously worked for the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, Which?, the Law Society and the BBC.

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EVENTS



25.06.2008 **EACA CARE awards**

This brand new creative award aims to recognise excellence in social marketing as part of EACA's overall commitment to promote Corporate Social Responsibility. The main aim of this annual ceremony is to highlight the advertising industry's specific contribution to society by selecting and celebrating the most successfully creative social marketing campaigns. The awards will cover subjects such as public health, environment, sustainable consumption, public safety, disability, human rights, domestic violence, child abuse, homelessness, education and other similar topical public issues.

European Parliament,
Brussels

[➔ More](#)

15.06.2008 - 21.06.2008 **Cannes Lions 55th International Advertising Festival**



Each year, over 10,000 visitors from the advertising and allied industries attend this event to celebrate the best of creativity across all media, to discuss industry issues and network with one another. Over 25,000 ads from all over

the world are showcased and judged at the Festival.
London

[➔ More](#)

15.06.2008 - 27.06.2008 **CSR Partnerships Summit**



CSR Partnerships is tailored to shed light on the broad and confusing world of partnerships. This informative and interactive experience is designed to aid businesses in their quest to build

new partnerships.

Ethical Corporation, Amsterdam [➔ More](#)

18.06.2008 - 19.06.2008 **IFRA Italia 2008**



IFRA Italia, now in its 11th year, will present case studies and best practices from insiders from the Italian and international newspaper industry: from industrial production management to the challenges for publishers and editors facing a rapidly changing media environment.

Darmstadt, Germany

[➔ More](#)



02.07.2008 - 03.07.2008 **3rd European Security Conference Initiative (ESCI 2008)**

This conference integrates security knowledge and strategies for Europe and its neighbourhood. Open to all, it brings together international experts from the public sector, research and academics, business and the media. It focuses on EU-related security (such as citizen security, security infrastructure, border security, security restoration in case of crisis, interconnectivity and interoperability in mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) and serves as a platform for security research coordination with a special view to trans-sectoral challenges and cross-cutting issues of comprehensive European security policy and research. The working languages are English and German.

Center for European Security Studies,
Weiss, Austria

[➔ More](#)

25.06.2008 - 26.06.2008 **The Future of Broadcasting**



This year's conference, hosted by Marketforce Communications Ltd, will provide insight into key industry developments whilst generating invaluable networking opportunities.

Radisson Mayfair,
London

[➔ More](#)

30.06.2008 - 04.07.2008 **English in the international workplace**



This course is specifically designed to improve English communication skills for professionals working in the field of international relations. The emphasis will be on presentation, writing and communication skills.

European Association for International Education (EAIE),
Dublin

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03.07.2008 - 04.07.2008 **EuroITV 2008 Conference**



The EuroITV conference brings together researchers and practitioners from diverse disciplines that include human-computer interaction, media studies, computer science, telecommunications, audiovisual design and management.

University of Salzburg,
Austria

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